



# Greater Carolina Kerala Association

## 56 Card Game Rules & Guidelines

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# 1 General Rules of 56 Card game

## 1.1 How to win

The game of 56 also known as Support is a card game of skill and chance. The objective of the game is to obtain a higher score of points than the opposing team at the end of a session or regulation play.

## 1.2 General Rules

- The game consists of dealing, bidding (often called auction) and play after which the hand is scored. The bidding ends with a contract, which is a declaration of one partnership that its side will take at least the declared number of points with a specified suit as trumps or without trumps. The bidding also ends when a bid is redoubled; making the prevailing bid the final contract for that deal.
- Two partnerships of three players each are needed to play 56. Although two-player and four-player partnerships are in vogue, the rules framed here below are meant to regulate three- player team format.
- A session of 56 consists of 7 deals (also known as hands). A hand is dealt in a counterclockwise direction, the bidding or auction proceeds in the same direction to a Conclusion. Then the hand is played. Finally, the hand's result is scored. Higher cumulative score at the end of each session determines the winner of that session.
- Two decks of cards are in play. "Card rank" from highest to lowest is J 9 A 10 K Q. All other denominations (8 through 2) are discarded. One deck will constitute 6 cards in play in each suit making a count of 24. Two decks make the total count to 48. Distributed equally between 6 individual players, each will hold 8 cards at the stage of bidding.
- In the bidding stage (during auction) the partnerships compete to determine who proposes the highest-ranked contract (maximum 56 and minimum 28) and the side that wins the bidding must then strive to fulfill that bargain by scoring at least the contracted number of points. The point system of bidding is based on card value in the tricks won:

| Card Type | Points |
|-----------|--------|
| Jack      | 3      |
| Nine      | 2      |
| Ace       | 1      |
| 10        | 1      |
| King      | 0      |
| Queen     | 0      |

Points are won by the declaring side if the contract is made; otherwise the contract is said to be defeated and the points are awarded to the opponents (defenders). A minimum bid of

28 in suits or no-trumps is mandatory for the lead player, seated to the immediate right of the dealer. This will be followed by bids by other players in turn in a counterclockwise direction up to a maximum bid of 56 in any of the four suits or notrumps.

- Change of seats within the team is permitted only before shuffling.
- Clarification on any bidding can be done only before proceeding to the next bid.

### 1.3 Point system

The following point scoring system will be maintained for all individual deals, and points will be recorded in score sheets, Cumulative scores will be determined at the end of each session or regulation play.

#### a) General points

| BID/CONTRACT  | Points – Declaring side<br>(Declaring side makes the contract) | Points – Opponent<br>(Contract is defeated) |
|---------------|--|---|
| 28 through 39 | 1 Point  | 2 Points                                    |
| 40 through 47 | 2 Points   | 3 Points                                    |
| 48 through 55 | 3 Points   | 4 Points                                    |
| 56            | 4 Points   | 5 Points                                    |

#### b) In the event of Doubling

| BID/CONTRACT  | Points – Declaring side<br>(Declaring side makes the contract) | Points – Opponent<br>(Contract is defeated) |
|---------------|--|---|
| 28 through 39 | 2 Points   | 4 Points                                    |
| 40 through 47 | 4 Points   | 6 Points                                    |
| 48 through 55 | 6 Points   | 8 Points                                    |
| 56            | 8 Points   | 10 Points                                   |

c) When Redoubled

| BID/CONTRACT  | Points – Declaring side<br>(Declaring side makes the contract) | Points – Opponent<br>(Contract is defeated) |
|---------------|--|---|
| 28 through 39 | 3 Points   | 6 Points                                    |
| 40 through 47 | 6 Points   | 9 Points                                    |
| 48 through 55 | 9 Points   | 12 Points                                   |
| 56            | 12 Points  | 15 Points                                   |

### 1.4 Card distribution

Cards are to be dealt first by the player determined by the draw. The next deal is to be performed by the player sitting immediately to the right of the dealer and so on. Cards will be dealt four at a time, face down in a counterclockwise direction in two (2) rounds.

1. The dealer will shuffle the cards thoroughly using both hands. Table flopping (as is done in the game of Rummy) is NOT permitted.
2. The cards are then offered to the player seated immediately to the left for “cutting”, an action of restacking performed by one hand in a single motion. Multiple restacking is NOT allowed.
3. Re-Deal of Hands:
  - a. The following infractions when occur will cause the hand to be re-dealt by the same dealer who caused the constraints: If any card is exposed during the process of the deal.
  - b. If any in-ordinate number of cards is dealt to any player (example. one player is dealt 9 cards and another 7 etc.).
  - c. If a player is dealt all 8 cards in the same suit.
  - d. If a player is dealt all 8 Jacks.

### 1.5 The bidding (auction)

All bidding shall be confined to the patterns approved by the framers and shall uphold the spirit of gamesmanship. Indicative bidding, signals, body gestures, diversionary non-bid-dialog/disturbance etc. are NOT permitted and will attract penalty points as determined by appropriate authority. All arbitrations should start at the deal table and a consensus solution between the contesting teams is the best way to resolve any issues. The Rules Committee shall invoke its authority only when requested by one or both competing teams.

1. It is mandatory for the lead player to bid a minimum of 28 in any suit or no-trump. A ‘pass’ by him/her means the bid is ‘28 no trumps’. The others can elect to ‘pass’ or ‘raise the bid’ at their ‘turn’. Bidding ‘turn’ occurs in an anticlockwise direction beginning from

the lead player. Bid/No Bid is also mandatory for each player at each of his turn. Silence or contemplation by a preceding player shall NOT be construed as a No-bid.

2. Bidding is permitted only at one's turn. Out of turn 'bidding' or out of turn 'discarding card' can result in a penalty of one (1) point if objected to by the opposing team, no other restrictions. A "Double" or "Re- double" bid out of turn will result in a penalty of one (1) point if objected to by the opposing team.
3. The bidding ends when a player proposes the highest ranked contract. At this time, the 'bidder' is allowed a one-time 'self-raise' to a higher score ceiling of 40, 48 or 56 in the same 'suit'. 'Doubling' and 'Redoubling' are allowed after the self-raise; but no other bidding is allowed.
4. Bidding modes shall comply with the parameters set forth in the ensuing articles. The examples of approved and unapproved bid patterns as attached shall form a strict guideline for all bidding conventions.

**Rules of Bidding:** General rules as indicated above apply to "bids" or "calls", unless specifically noted to the contrary. When bidding, only the following six terms are allowed. These terms are generally given conventional meanings. Teams may develop their own convention within the purview of the use of approved terminology of bidding. Use of the approved terms to convey bid intent to partner(s) and the opposing team, is mandatory. Using prearranged terms outside the purview of the rules to confuse the opponents is not permitted.

***Bidding terms:***

- a. Numbers: As in 28 through 56 used with suits and as in 1, 2 etc. used with plus (2)
- b. Suits: Clubs, Diamonds, Spades, Hearts
- c. Plus: Addition to previous bid. A plus 2 Diamond bid for e.g. after a 29 Spades bid will establish the current bid as 31 Diamonds.
- d. No- trump: Denotes top ranked card of the lead suit wins trick; there is no ruffing.
- e. Noes: This is used to indicate void in the suit bid by the previous bidder; if this becomes the contract, no-trump will be effective.
- f. Pass: Generally used to denote "No Bid", and to pass the bid to next player. Also used in a convention to denote low key hand as in "28 Pass", which when becomes a contract will revert to "28 No-trumps". It can be used only with Numbers in a bid (e.g. 28 Pass, 56 pass etc.)

A higher bid of pass with number is permitted. (e.g. 37 pass after a previous bid of 36 spades. If everyone passes, it is played as 37 No-trump). Use "Pass" only with certain limitation, please see examples of limitations. A certain order of these terms used in bids is explained below. A maximum of three terms in one bid are allowed, but not necessarily all the combinations. Given below are the bids and its order of the terms that are allowed and will be known as "approved bids".

***Approved bids:***

- Number followed by suit - e.g. 28 Clubs
- Suit followed by number - e.g. Clubs 28 (generally known as reverse bid)
- Number followed by 'No-trump' - e.g. 28 No-trump

- Number followed by 'Noes' - e.g. 28 Noes
- Number followed by pass -- e.g. 28 Pass
- Plus, followed by suite... e.g. Plus Diamonds
- Suite followed by plus... --e.g. Diamond Plus (part of reverse bid)
- Plus, number, followed by suit - e.g. Plus One/Two Diamonds,
- Suite followed by plus, number - e.g. Diamond plus one/Two (part of reverse Bid)
- Plus, number followed by 'Noes - e.g. Plus One No's

**Not approved bids:**

- Terms like minus, more, Adhikam Onnu.
  - Plus Noes/plus No-trump without Number at the start of the bidding.
  - Number, plus followed by Suit -- e.g. One plus Diamonds, Two plus Diamonds or One plus Noes
  - Reverse bidding with Pass E.g. Pass 28, Pass 56 etc.
5. To bid in a suit, the bidder must hold at least one card in that suit. Any violation will attract penalties equivalent to violation of Cardinal Rule (see article 3.10).
  6. No review of biddings will be permitted except in the case of an immediate bid too feeble to be heard or in the case of a distraction caused by third parties or caused due to mitigating circumstances. In case of dispute, judging committee (coordinator and BODS) will rule.
  7. Pass bids are generally considered as "No Bid" with the exceptions listed above.
  8. "Double" is considered as a bid. Double does not increase the numeric value of the bid. All other 5 players have the option to overbid it or any of the 3 players whose team's bid has been doubled may redouble it at one's turn. A re-double also signifies end of the bidding for that particular deal.
  9. If any player holding a constraining hand as described in article 1.4 fails to disclose this when occurs, the team shall be penalized for violation of "cardinal Rule" as detailed in point 10.
  10. Cardinal Rule: Each player shall follow through with the same suit "in play", if the player holds at least one card in the same suit. Obligation discussed in 9 above is also added as a part of the cardinal rule.

No external referee or umpire will be assigned for any match. The progress of the matches is to be monitored and recorded by the players themselves. If any member is caught violating the 'cardinal rule' (defined above), the team shall be penalized by awarding the 'deal' and three additional points to the opposing team.

Awarding the game means one of the following:

1. If the declaring team has violated the rule, the contract shall be considered defeated

2. If the defending team has committed the infraction, the contract will be declared as made.

### 1.6 Play of the hand

- ❖ After completion of the bidding by auction, a contract is recorded at the table. Play of the hand will now commence.
- ❖ The lead player, who is pre-determined regardless of the bid or who is the successful bidder, will lead the first card followed by other players in a counterclockwise direction. Thereafter the player who wins the trick will lead for the subsequent trick and so on till all 8 cards are played. The highest card in play in the lead suit will win the trick unless "ruffed" by any player void in the lead suit. When two equal ranked cards are in play (e.g. Spade jack lead by one player and Spade Jack followed through by another), the first lead card among equals will prevail and win the trick.
- ❖ Out of turn leading is not allowed. Any infraction in this regard whether intentional or inadvertent, will attract a penalty of one point if objected to by the opposing team.
- ❖ A card when lead and exposed may not be retrieved and substituted with another, especially from the same suit unless extenuating circumstances occur. For example, accidental slip from hand resulting in violation of "Cardinal Rule" which is identified before a new lead is in play on the table.
- ❖ A deal shall not be abandoned once the play has commenced. If the deal sequence is erred unintentionally, it has to be identified prior to the commencement of the play to effect correction. However, the total number of deals in the session has to be maintained for uniformity and game control.
- ❖ Review of closed tricks will not be permitted after a new lead is in play on the table.
- ❖ Players of a team can interchange or rotate their seats at any time during the session, provided that this is affected before the cards are dealt. Any team can opt to interchange all 3 seats with the opposing team after half way stage of the session. This option will be restricted to one occurrence during the entire session.
- ❖ All players are obligated to identify and opt for reshuffle in the event he is dealt a constraining hand.
- ❖ A constraining hand is non-playable and is characterized by
  - He is dealt all 8 Jacks and
  - He is dealt 8 cards from the same suite.
- ❖ Failure to comply will attract a penalty of 3 points besides points awarded for forfeiting the deal.
- ❖ Control of the play is the responsibility of both competing teams. If dispute still persists, Rules Committee will deliver ruling on the dispute. The decision of the Rules Committee shall be final and binding.
  - o If a player tables two or more cards during play, it is declaration of claim of all remaining tricks. If the opposing team challenges this claim, they have an option to simulate the play and establish any possibility of obtaining a single trick using any permutation or combination. If that possibility is established, then all remaining tricks will be claimed en-block by the challenging team. This however does not affect the status of tricks already won prior to the challenge.

## 1.7 Scoring

- ❖ At the end of bidding, the designated scorer (usually one player of any team) shall enter the value of the bidding (contract) into the score sheet. The play can commence only after this task is completed.
- ❖ At the end of play of each hand, points amassed by each team are counted and compared to the contract. If the contract is made, the requisite number of points as enumerated in section 1.3 is entered in favor of the declaring team. If the contract is found defeated, requisite points (refer chart 1.3) are entered in favor of the defending team.
- ❖ The score sheet shall be accessible to both teams for verification. At the end of the session, the cumulative points scored by each team are tabulated and verified.
- ❖ The team scoring highest cumulative total points is declared the winner of the session and will be awarded three match points.
- ❖ If the points are equal the winner will be selected based on the number of wins
- ❖ All scores may be verified prior to the bidding of the new hand. Once the bidding is in progress, queries or comments about the status of the score, is in violation of the code of conduct. Penalties (up to 2 points) based on the impact of such actions may be imposed by the judging committee if requested by the opposing team